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France

Agricultural Situation

French President's Foundation for Agriculture and Development Launched

2005

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Report Highlights:

At the end of 2004, a new French non-profit organization (FARM) (Foundation for Agriculture and Rural life in the World) was officially christened by French President Jacques Chirac. this foundation gathers major French companies from the food and services sectors such as Danone, Credit Agricole and Carrefour. The foundation aims at increasing agricultural productivity in developing countries. FARM will also provide technical assistance for agriculture and food processing. the FARM foundation will work with the private sector to tackle development issue that are not of the forefront of international organizations. One expects the FARM foundation to make some recommendations about developing countries and the Doha Round. The annual budget of the FARM foundation will reach 8 to 10 millions euros coming from private contributors. The FARM program will be launched at the same time that a French Alliance Against Hunger plan to launch its program under the umbrella of the FAO.

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Unscheduled Report
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On December 6, 2004, the FARM non-profit foundation (*Fondation pour l'Agriculture et la Ruralité dans le Monde / Foundation for Agriculture and Rural life in the World*) was officially launched at the Elysée Presidential residence in Paris. Christened by French President Jacques Chirac, this foundation brings together major French companies from the food and services sectors such as Danone (food manufacturer), Carrefour and Euri-Casino (retailers), Credit Agricole SA (bank), as well as Air France (transportation), EDF (electricity utility), Suez (construction and water) and Veolia (water and services). Daniel Caron, a farmer and CEO of Credit Agricole SA heads the FARM foundation. The aim of this foundation is to promote agricultural productivity in developing countries, to provide technical assistance for agriculture and food processing sectors to the less developed countries and to be a think tank on agricultural strategy for development in those countries. On technical assistance, the FARM foundation especially target expertise in rural electrification, water management, food processing, food distribution and agricultural financing. The French President had promised to support such foundation during the world young farmers conference in Paris in June 2003. For President Chirac, the FARM foundation will propose private sector's ideas on development related issues not tackled by international organizations such as the WTO or the United Nations. One expects the FARM foundation to publicly issue soon some recommendations about developing countries and the Doha Round.

Large agricultural and food French companies, are expected to join the foundation. Another association, named "the Friends of the FARM foundation" will gather smaller companies and individuals. The annual budget of the FARM foundation will reach 8 to 10 millions euros, given by private contributors.

Independently from the FARM Foundation, another initiative on a French Alliance against Hunger was launched in Paris in December 2004 under the umbrella of the FAO. The French Alliance which will belong to the International Alliance against Hunger, will bring together farm organizations, private entities, local and regional communities as well as political groups. The French Alliance is animated by Jacques Godfrain, President of the French Association for FAO, elected representative to the Aveyron Constituency and former Minister for Cooperation between 1995 and 1997. The French Chambers of Agriculture aim at being a corner stone of the French Alliance against Hunger.